SERIOUS CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

ELECTION

OF A

PRESIDENT:

ADDRESSED TO THE

Citizens of the United States.

TRENTON:
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M,DCCC.

SERIOUS CONSIDERATIONS,

&c. &c.

Fellow-Citizens,

THE time is drawing near, when you will be called to give your voice in the election of a President. In the exercise of this important privilege, it will be granted, that great deliberation is necessary; and that upon the choice of a suitable person depends, under Divine Providence, the prosperity of our nation. A few considerations, therefore, will be received by you with candour, and allowed all the weight to which you may think them entitled. The writer of them has neither held, nor does he expect ever to hold any office under government; he means not to be an advocate for any particular man; he is not actuated by a mere regard to the political principles of any party; but, if his heart deceive him not, by a sincere desire for the public welfare.

It is well understood that the Honorable Thomas Jefferson is a candidate for the Chief Magistracy of

the United States, and that a number of our citizens will give him all their ſupport. I would not preſume to dictate to you *who* ought to be Preſident, but entreat you to hear with patience my reaſons why *he* ought not.

To the declarations of diſintereſtedneſs and ſincerity already made, I think it proper to add, that I have no perſonal reſentment whatever againſt Mr. Jefferſon, and that it is with pain I oppoſe him; that I never was in his company, and would hardly know him; that I honor him as holding a high office in government; that I admire his talents, and feel grateful for the ſervices which he has been inſtrumental in rendering to his country; and that my objection to his being promoted to the Preſidency is founded ſingly upon his diſbelief of the Holy Scriptures; or, in other words, his rejection of the Chriſtian Religion and open profeſſion of Deiſm.

Notwithſtanding the general character of Mr. Jefferſon, and the proofs of his Deiſtical principles which have been partly publiſhed, at different times, there are ſome who ſtill doubt; or, if they admit the truth, are diſpoſed to ſay that he is no worſe than his opponents. Whether he is worſe or not will be ſhown hereafter. When the ſpirit of party is ſo violent as we have ſeen it in this country, and the vileſt calumnies have been propagated reſpecting the beſt characters, it is not ſurpriſing that the reports which are circulated ſhould be received with caution, eſpecially when there is not ready acceſs to the higheſt and moſt infallible ſources of information. I ſhall endeavour in this addreſs, to preſent to your view the collective

evidence of Mr. Jefferſon's principles as to religion, and ſhow you why ſuch a man ought not to be honored and entruſted with the office of chief magiſtrate. This I hope to do principally from Mr. Jefferſon's own writings, and in ſuch a manner that neither he or any of his friends ſhall be able juſtly to charge me with the leaſt miſrepreſentation.

Beſides the publications acknowledged by a man, ſome dependence may be fairly placed upon his general character, and his converſation as related by men of intelligence and veracity. The world is ſeldom miſtaken as to a man's talents and moral principles; and we ſafely rely upon reſpectable teſtimony. The avowal, therefore, of ſentiments in converſation which ſhall be related, cannot be doubted, from the nature of the authority; and our belief will be ſtrengthened when this is viewed in connection with the written evidence.

In the work of Mr. Jefferſon, intitled "*Notes on "the ſtate of Virginia*," what he ſays on the ſubject of the deluge, is a clear proof of his diſreſpect for divine revelation. He oppoſes the opinion, that the ſhells found on the tops of high mountains ought to be conſidered as a proof of an univerſal deluge. He endeavours to ſhow, that if the whole contents of the atmoſphere were water, the lands could be overflowed to the height of 52 1-2 feet only, and that in Virginia this would be a very ſmall proportion even of the champaign country. He rejects a ſecond opinion, that "the "bed of the ocean, has, by ſome great convulſion of "nature, been heaved to the heights at which we now "find ſhells and other remains of marine animals."

He rejects likewise a third solution suggested by Voltaire.—"There is a wonder," says Mr. Jefferson, "somewhere; is it greatest on this branch of the dilemma, on that which supposes the existence of a "power, of which we have no evidence in any other "case; or on the first, which requires us to believe "the creation of a body of water, and its subsequent "annihilation? The three hypotheses are equally unsatisfactory, and we must be contented to acknowledge, that this great phenomenon is as yet unsolved. Ignorance is preferable to error; and he is "less remote from the truth who believes nothing, "than he who believes what is wrong." *

Let it be remarked here, that could Mr. Jefferson found, what he thought evidence, that the waters had ever covered the highest mountains, he would have admitted that solution as to the shells; but he attempts to show the improbability of such a quantity of water being produced, and consequently discredits the sacred history. The account given by the inspired writer, is, "All the fountains of the great deep were "broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened, and the rain was upon the earth forty days and "forty nights. And the waters prevailed exceedingly "upon the earth; and *all the high hills that were under "the whole heaven were covered.* Fifteen cubits upwards "did the waters prevail; and *the mountains were co-*

* Page 28, to p. 31.—The edition which I use is that printed in Philadelphia, 1788. Mr. Jefferson has published, so late as the present year, an appendix to this work; but it relates wholly to the murder of Logan's family. There is not a retraction of, or even an apology for any of his sentiments, though he knows they have been repeatedly censured.

" *vered.*"† Moſes mentions two cauſes of the deluge; *the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened;* but Mr. Jefferſon does not ſo much as name this old philoſopher, while he indirectly denies the facts, or, like other infidels, cannot ſtill get water enough to cover the mountains. Even a miracle is not ſufficient with him, or rather his faith is too weak to receive *a miracle. Requires us*, ſays he, *to believe the creation of a body of water and its ſubſequent annihilation.* He is at liberty to philoſophize, if he pleaſes, on the cauſes of the deluge; it is not my buſineſs at preſent (and I beg that it may be remembered) to refute his principles; but only to ſhow their inconſiſtency with the Holy Scriptures. I am not called then to controvert his poſitions, that *ignorance is preferable to error*, and that *he is leſs remote from the truth who believes nothing, than he who believes what is wrong;* but I will be permitted to ſay, that it is ſafeſt for him to believe the Moſaic account of the deluge, though he ſhould never find out a ſatisfactory ſolution; yea, though he ſhould adopt a wrong one.

Again, upon the queſtion, Whence the firſt inhabitants of America originated? Mr. Jefferſon is of opinion, that there are among the Indians a great variety of languages radically different, and from this circumſtance, he argues the impoſſibility of their having emigrated from Aſia. His words are, " Ar-
" ranging them under the radical ones to which they
" may be palpably traced, and doing the ſame by thoſe
" of the red men of Aſia, there will be found proba-

† Geneſis vii. 11, 12, 19, 20.

" bly, twenty in America, for one in Aſia, of thoſe " radical languages, ſo called, becauſe if they were " ever the ſame, they have loſt all reſemblance to " one another. A ſeparation into dialects may be " the work of a few ages only, but for two dialects " to recede from one another till they have loſt all " veſtiges of their common origin, muſt require an " immenſe courſe of time; perhaps not leſs than *ma-* " *ny people give to the age of the earth.* A greater " number of thoſe radical changes of language hav- " ing taken place among the red men of America, " proves them of greater antiquity than thoſe of " Aſia."* I will not aſk him here, what time *he* gives to the age of the earth? Whether he believes the ſcripture chronology? Or, whether he believes the earth to be fourteen thouſand years old, judging by the lavas in the neighborhood of Mount Etna? Whether he depends moſt on the authority of Moſes, or of Canonico Recupero?† What I wiſh to be remarked is, that if the Indians did not emigrate from Aſia, and are even of greater antiquity than the Aſiatics, then the opinion is inſinuated that they are a diſtinct race of men originally created and placed in America, contrary to the ſacred hiſtory that all mankind have deſcended from a ſingle pair. This was the opinion of Lord Kames, and is ſupported by the ſame argument of a variety of languages, in his ſketches of the

* Page 108.

† This man has been engaged in writing the hiſtory of Mount Etna. He has diſcovered a lava which, he ſays, muſt have flowed from the mountain at leaſt fourteen thouſand years ago. The Biſhop of the Dioceſe adviſed him to take care not to make his mountain older than Moſes. I have not heard the iſſue.

hiſtory of Man.* This is evidently the opinion of Mr. Jefferſon; an opinion repugnant to ſacred hiſtory, to the expreſs declaration of the apoſtle, that "God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to "dwell on all the face of the earth," and ſtriking at the root of the plan of ſalvation revealed in the goſpel. To whom is the goſpel to be preached? To the poſterity of Adam only. To thoſe of whom Adam was the natural and federal head. Salvation is purchaſed, and can be offered to no other race. "As in Adam "all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive. "The firſt man Adam was made a living ſoul, the "laſt Adam was made a quickening ſpirit."†

Every doubt will be removed as to the ſentiment of Mr. Jefferſon, when we conſider what he aſſerts more plainly reſpecting the negroes. After mentioning ſome diſtinctions between them and the white people, he ſays, "There are other phyſical diſtinc-"tions proving *a difference of race.*" He makes the blacks inferior to the whites in reaſon and imagination. He profeſſes to take his examples not in Africa, but among the blacks born in this country, and who have enjoyed conſiderable advantages. He denies "that their inferiority is the effect merely of "their condition of life;" ſays, that they improve by mixture with the whites; compares them with the

* See an excellent Eſſay on the cauſes of the variety of complexion and figure in the human ſpecies. To which are added, Strictures on Lord Kames' diſcourſe on the original diverſity of mankind, by the Rev. Dr. Samuel S. Smith. This work has juſtly acquired reputation in America and Europe, and has been tranſlated into ſeveral languages.

† i. Cor. xv. 22, 45.

Roman ſlaves who excelled in arts and ſcience, but who "were of the race of whites;" and after a long diſcuſſion of the ſubject, concludes in this ſingular manner. "I advance it therefore as a ſuſpicion only, that "the blacks, whether originally a diſtinct race, or "made diſtinct by time and circumſtances, are infe-"rior to the whites in the endowments both of body "and mind. It is not againſt experience to ſuppoſe, "that different ſpecies of the ſame genus, or varieties "of the ſame ſpecies, may poſſeſs different qualifica-"tions. Will not a lover of natural hiſtory then, one "who views the gradations in all the races of animals "with the eye of philoſophy, excuſe an effort to keep "thoſe in the department of man as diſtinct as nature "has formed them?"*

Can any man now doubt of Mr. Jefferſon's real opinion, and of that opinion being directly oppoſite to divine revelation? In his concluſion he betrays, like a true infidel, an inconſiſtency with himſelf. Having labored to point out phyſical and moral diſtinctions between the Whites and the Blacks, he advances it at laſt "as a *ſuſpicion* only," that the latter were inferior to the former; having expreſsly aſſerted, that the diſtinctions mentioned, "*prove a difference of race*," now he modeſtly conveys the doubt, "whether ori-"ginally a diſtinct race, or made diſtinct by time and "circumſtances." Would a man who believes in a divine revelation even hint a ſuſpicion of this kind? The laſt ſentence, however, though curious, is clear enough as to Mr. Jefferſon's real ſentiment. It ſeems that he views his diſcuſſion as "an effort to keep

* Page 147 to p. 154.

" thoſe in the department of man as diſtinct as nature has formed them," and he prays to be *excused*. Obſerve that he pleads only for a *department*, a *diſtinct* one. Will the philoſopher promiſe, if we indulge him, not to uſe his arguments hereafter in favor of the Ourang Outang? Will he engage not to trouble us, by the varieties of colour, ſhape, and ſize, to fit up numerous other departments? The matter is too ſerious to jeſt with. Sir, we excuſe you not! You have degraded the blacks from the rank which God hath given them in the ſcale of being! You have advanced the ſtrongeſt argument for their ſtate of ſlavery! You have inſulted human nature! You have contemned the word of truth and the mean of ſalvation! And, whether you will excuſe us or not, we exclude you, in your preſent belief, from any department among Chriſtians!

Though the ſentiment of Mr. Jefferſon is evident enough to every attentive reader, yet it may not be amiſs to know the light in which it is underſtood in Europe. The Monthly Reviewers in London, in reviewing his Notes, ſay, "It is obſervable, that the "Virginians, ſoon after the aſſertion of Independence, " appointed a committee to reviſe their code of laws, " and though the emancipation of negro ſlaves, entered into the plan of reformation, yet the idea of their " being an inferior ſpecies of the human genus, go- "verned their regulations." After quoting the whole paſſage reſpecting the blacks, they add, "We recollect " a tract relating to the ſugar trade, written in the " name of John Gardner Kames, eſq. a Jamaica planter, " in which the ſame argument was extended, by an " appeal to facts, to connecting the negroes with the

"Ourang Outang."* This latter writer endeavoured "to prove that many negroes are connected in blood "with the Ourang Outang, and that the importation "of them contributed to humanize the descendants "of brutes."†

Upon a plan proposed for the institution of schools in the state of Virginia, Mr. Jefferson says, "instead "of putting the Bible and Testament in the hands of "children, at an age when their judgments are not "sufficiently matured for religious inquiries, their "memories may here be stored with the most useful "facts from Grecian, Roman, European and Ameri-"can history. The first elements of morality too may "be instilled into their minds; such as, when farther "developed, as their judgements advance in strength, "may teach them how to work out their own greatest "happiness, &c."‡ He mentions the Bible at last; for what purpose is easily seen. When the deluge and the origin of the blacks are under discussion, we do not hear a word about it. Moses is treated as an historian utterly unworthy of his notice.

I have heard objections made to the Bible as a school book, but never for the reason here given. A large part of the Bible consists of history, or is a relation of facts; and one would think that the minds of children are as equal to these as to any other; and that they would be more useful to them than the facts contained

* Vol. 78, p. 379.

† In justice to M. Jefferson, it must be said that he is an advocate for the emancipation of the blacks; though unhappily, he has raised one of the greatest obstacles, by denying them to be the same species with the whites.

‡ Page 157.

in profane hiſtory. The Bible is the moſt ancient, and the only authentic hiſtory in the world. Mr. Jefferſon admits that "the firſt elements of morality "may be inſtilled into the minds of children." Why not the firſt elements of religion, which are the foundation of all ſound morality? Are the minds of children matured for the one and not for the other? He has not told us when it is proper to teach them a little religion; and how we may prevent, in the mean time irreligious principles. Indeed we hear no more about religion or the Bible; nor does he think it neceſſary, for theſe elements of morality may *teach them how to work out their own greateſt happineſs*. If this be not a deiſtical education, I know not what is. Had he prized the Bible, and been properly acquainted with its contents, he would have known that the facts related in that book are the moſt ancient, the moſt authentic, the moſt intereſting, and the moſt uſeful in the world; that they are, above all others, level to the capacities of children, calculated to impreſs their tender minds, and form them to live to God, to their country, and to themſelves.

After what has been produced, who can refuſe his belief of what I ſhall now relate? When the late Rev. Dr. John B. Smith reſided in Virginia, the famous *Mazzei* happened one night to be his gueſt. Dr. Smith having as uſual, aſſembled his family for evening devotions, the circumſtance occaſioned ſome diſcourſe on religion, in which the Italian made no ſecret of his infidel principles. In the courſe of converſation he remarked to Dr. Smith, "Why your "great philoſopher and ſtateſman, Mr. Jefferſon, is "rather farther gone in infidelity than I am;" and

related, in confirmation, the following anecdote; that as he was once riding with Mr. Jefferſon, he expreſſed his "ſurpriſe that the people of this country take no "better care of their public buildings." What buildings?" exclaimed Mr. Jefferſon. "Is not that a church?" replied he, pointing to a decayed edifice. "Yes" anſwered Mr. Jefferſon. "I am aſtoniſhed," ſaid the other, "that they permit it to be in ſo ruinous a "condition." "*It is good enough,*" rejoined Mr. Jefferſon," *for him that was born in a manger!!*" Such a contemptuous fling at the bleſſed Jeſus, could iſſue from the lips of no other than a deadly foe to his name and his cauſe.*

There is another paſſage in Mr. Jefferſon's Notes which requires the moſt ſerious attention. In ſhowing that civil rulers ought not to interfere with the rights of conſcience, and that the legitimate powers of government extend to ſuch acts only as are injurious to others, he ſays, "It does me no injury for my neigh-"bor to ſay there are twenty gods, or no god. It nei-"ther picks my pocket, nor breaks my leg."† The whole paſſage is written with a great degree of ſpirit. It is remarkable for that conciſeneſs, perſpicuity and force which characterize the ſtyle of Mr. Jefferſon. Some have ventured, from the words I have quoted

* This ſtory I had from Dr. Smith more than once, and he told it to, I know not how many. I applied to one gentleman, who I knew had heard it from Dr. Smith, and we agreed in the relation. There is no poſſibility of contradicting it, except by the improbable ſuppoſition that Mazzei told a downright falſhood. Dr. Smith was one of the moſt faithful, zealous, and ſucceſsful miniſters in all this country. His memory will long be precious to thoſe who knew him.

† Page 169.

to bring even the charge of atheiſm againſt him. This is a high charge, and it becomes us carefully to examine the ground upon which it reſts ; though the words themſelves, their connection, and the deſign for which they are introduced may be inſufficient to ſupport it, yet there are concurrent circumſtances to be taken into conſideration, and which will fix at leaſt a ſuſpicion. Theſe circumſtances are, the general diſregard of religious things, the aſſociates at home and correſpondents abroad, and the principles maintained in converſation. With theſe things I am not ſo well acquainted as many. I ſhall only mention what paſſed in converſation between Mr. Jefferſon and a gentleman of diſtinguiſhed talents and ſervices, on the neceſſity of religion to government. The gentleman inſiſted that ſome religious faith and inſtitutions of worſhip, claiming a divine origin, were neceſſary to the order and peace of ſociety. Mr. Jefferſon ſaid that he differed widely from him, and that "he wiſh-"ed to ſee a government in which no religious o-"pinions were held, and where the ſecurity for pro-"perty and ſocial order reſted entirely upon the force "of the laws." Would not this be a nation of Atheiſts ? Is it not natural, after the free declaration of ſuch a ſentiment, to ſuſpect the man himſelf of Atheiſm ? Could one who is impreſſed with the exiſtence of a God, the Creator, Preſerver, and Governor of all things, to whom we are under a law and accountable ; and the inſeparable connection of this truth with the ſocial order and the eternal happineſs of mankind, expreſs himſelf in this manner.

Putting the moſt favorable conſtruction upon the words in the Notes, they are extremely reprehenſible. Does not the belief influence the practice ? How then

can it be a matter of indifference what a man believes? The doctrine, that a man's life may be good, let his faith be what it may, is contradictory to reason and the experience of mankind. It is true that a mere opinion of my neighbour will do me no injury. Government cannot regulate or punish it. The right of private opinion is inalienable. But let my neighbour once persuade himself that there is no God, and he will soon pick my pocket, and break, not only my *leg* but my *neck*. If there be no God, there is no law; no future account; government then is the ordinance of man only, and we cannot be subject for conscience sake. No colours can paint the horrid effects of such a principle, and the deluge of miseries with which it would overwhelm the human race.

How strongly soever Mr. Jefferson may reason against the punishment by law of erroneous opinions, even of Atheism, they are not the less frightful and dangerous in their consequences. He admits the propriety of rejecting the testimony of an atheist in a court of justice, and of fixing a stigma upon him. Just such a stigma the United States ought to fix upon himself. Though neither the constitution, nor any law forbids his election, yet the public opinion ought to disqualify him. On account of his disbelief of the Holy Scriptures, and his attempts to discredit them, he ought to be rejected from the Presidency. No professed deist, be his talents and acquirements what they may, ought to be promoted to this place by the suffrages of a Christian nation. The greater his talents and the more extensive his acquirements, the greater will be his power and the more extensive his influence in poisoning mankind.

Some of the friends of Mr. Jefferſon, being aſhamed that he ſhould be reputed an infidel and wiſhing that he had a little religion, were it ever ſo little, whiſper that he is a ſort of Chriſtian. Rather than give him up, they hint that he is as good a chriſtian as Dr. Prieſtley, or thereabouts. I ſhall not diſpute a moment whether he is as good as Dr. Prieſtley, or Dr. Prieſtley as bad as him; but aſk for the proofs of his profeſſing chriſtianity in any ſhape. How does he ſpend the Lord's day? Is he known to worſhip with any denomination of chriſtians? Where? When? How often? Though going to church is no certain ſign of a man not being an infidel, any more than his pretending a regard for the chriſtian religion in his writings, yet a total or habitual neglect of public worſhip, muſt be admitted as a ſtrong proof againſt him. That wretch, Voltaire partook of the ſacrament of the ſupper, while he blaſphemed Chriſt, and endeavored, with the malice of a devil, to extirpate his religion from the earth. Hume, Kames, Gibbon, and many infidels pretended a regard for divine revelation, while they ſought indirectly and ſecretly to deſtroy its credibility. I have exhibited proofs of Mr. Jefferſon's infidelity. I wait for the proofs that he is as good as even Dr. Prieſtly, which will be ſtill bad enough; and I ſhall exceedingly rejoice if any man ſhould be able to prove him better.

Let me aſk your attention farther, while I briefly point out the effects which the election of Mr. Jefferſon would produce.

1. It would give us an unfavorable character with foreign nations. We are as yet a young nation, un-

der a government recently formed ; and it is of conſiderable importance that we obtain reſpect and confidence abroad. There are now jealouſies of us entertained, and reproaches caſt upon us. Two nations with whom we are moſt connected and from whom we have the moſt to fear, carefully watch us, and will conduct toward us according to the opinion which they have of us. We have nothing to fear from either of them, if we ſhow a proper ſpirit, deal juſtly with all, and reverence the commands of the Moſt High. I devoutly pray that we may have no connection with any nation farther than is neceſſary for the purpoſe of commerce ; and that we may boaſt only of being *Americans*.

Some may ſuppoſe that by the election of Mr. Jefferſon we will pleaſe the French nation. Were this true, ſtill it would be a queſtion, whether it is prudent to do this, without neceſſity, at the riſk of diſpleaſing another nation. But the truth is, in my opinion, that by his election, America would expoſe herſelf to the juſt deriſion of both. My blood mounts, when I think for a moment of either Britiſh or French giving my country a Preſident. I deſpiſe their threats, and I ſuſpect their careſſes. Let them mind their own buſineſs. I will pleaſe myſelf, and take care of my own concerns. How deſirable ſoever a reputation with them may be, unleſs it is founded on a regard to God and our country, it cannot be ſolid and laſting.

What would be the natural reflections of foreigners, were Mr. Jefferſon our Preſident ? Would they not ſay ? " Either the Americans have little impreſſ-

ions of religion and of its being eſſential to morality and good government, or they have few men verſed in the ſcience of government, or they are moſt dangerouſly torn by party ſpirit; otherwiſe they would not have exalted by a voluntary choice ſuch a man to the ſeat of the firſt magiſtrate. Juſt returning from the tomb of the great and good Waſhington, they ſeem to have buried all their virtue with him. They appear now to be a weak, a divided, and an irreligious people, doomed to diſſentions among themſelves, and to be an eaſy prey to their ambitious neighbours."— Yes, my fellow citizens, there was a Waſhington. We ſhall "never look on his fellow again." "Two Waſhingtons come not in one age." His name was, under God, our ſhield and defence. He honored God, reverenced his ſabbaths, and attended upon the inſtitutions of his worſhip. He has borne teſtimony in his farewel addreſs, that, "religion and morality are indiſpenſable ſupports of political proſperity:" inſeparably "connected with private and public felicity." He raiſed his country to honor and happineſs by the exertion of his talents, and ſtill more by the magic of his virtue. Let us not inſult his aſhes, and debaſe ourſelves in the ſight of the world by the appointment of an improper ſucceſſor.

2. Conſider the effects which the election of any man avowing the principles of Mr. Jefferſon would have upon our citizens. The effects would be, to deſtroy religion, introduce immorality, and looſen all the bonds of ſociety. Will it be ſaid, that he is a man of too much underſtanding and prudence to meddle with religion, and ſeek to diſſeminate his own principles? What aſſurance have we of this? We remem-

ber that Hazael, when forewarned of the crimes which he would commit, anſwered, "But what! is thy ſervant a dog that he ſhould do this great thing?"* And yet he afterwards did it. But Mr. Jefferſon tells us openly what his principles are; and we are to preſume that he will act upon them. It is a light thing with him to ſay there is *no God*. He wiſhes to ſee a government where the people have *no religious opinions and forms of worſhip*. If he ſhould endeavour to carry theſe principles into operation, and we ſhould complain, he might ſay, "What right had you to expect otherwiſe? I told you before hand; and after this information you entruſted me. Had I not a better right to conclude, that you rather approved of my principles, than expected me to renounce them?" Mr. Jefferſon indeed has ſhown us, that his conduct will correſpond with his principles. We have not forgotten the ſunday-feaſt of him and his friends at Frederickſburgh, in Virginia, on his return from the ſecond ſeat in government.

To do Mr. Jefferſon, however, more than juſtice, let us ſuppoſe that he will make no attempts either by word or act to unſettle the religious belief; that he will not try his favorite project of a government without religion; and that he will not think it "high "time for this country to get rid of religion and the "clergy;"† will not the ſtation of Preſident alone

* II Kings, viii. 13.

† This ſentiment was expreſſed to one of the firſt characters in Philadelphia, by a pupil and admirer of Mr. Jefferſon. *Sequitur paſſibus æquis.*—I have mentioned only in one inſtance the name; but all I relate depends on the beſt authority. I ſhall not relate ſeveral other things, merely becauſe I do not ſufficiently know the authority.

have a moſt baneful influence? Does not every perſon acquainted with human nature, and who is attentive to the ſtate of manners in ſociety, know that the principles and manners of thoſe called the higher ranks, and eſpecially of thoſe in the adminiſtration of government, ſoon pervade all claſſes? Let the firſt magiſtrate be a profeſſed infidel, and infidels will ſurround him. Let him ſpend the ſabbath in feaſting, in viſiting or receiving viſits, in riding abroad, but never in going to church; and to frequent public worſhip will become unfaſhionable. Infidelity will become the prattle from the higheſt to the loweſt condition in life, and univerſal diſoluteneſs will follow. "The wicked walk on every ſide, when the vileſt men "are exalted."*

Though there have been ſome infidels whoſe lives appeared to be outwardly regular, occaſioned, it may be, by the conſtitution of body or peculiar reſtraints, yet they have been generally vicious. It is certain that infidelity leads to licentious manners; and theſe again to the deſtruction of all ſocial order and happineſs. Principles are the fountain which, if corrupted, will ſend forth impure ſtreams. Epicurus, it is ſaid, was exemplary in his life; but his doctrine that the ſupreme good of man conſiſted in pleaſure, ruined the morals of the people. His diſciples, taking his words in a groſs ſenſe, placed all their happineſs in bodily pleaſures and debauchery. Hume was amiable in his manners and ſeems to have been carried away by the pride of philoſophy; but thouſands have embraced his principles as an excuſe for, and an encou-

* Pſalm xii. 8.

ragement in their wickedneſs.* Surely when we conſider the principles which have been induſtriouſly circulated in this country, and the hold which they have taken upon the minds of many; the want of ſubordination in families; the diſſipation; the mercenary diſpoſition; the party intereſts, and the party rage; we have juſt occaſion of great alarm. Inſtead of encouraging in the ſmalleſt degree what would promote and ſyſtematize (if the expreſſion be proper) theſe evils, every virtuous man ought boldly to ſtem the torrent, and to warn aloud his countrymen of the impending danger. Indifference or deſpondency is ruin. A little longer and it will be too late. The malady will have ſeized the vitals. The whole maſs will be corrupted and diſſolution enſue. Who can tell, whether yet by the union and exertion of the portion of virtue left us, God may cauſe *that we periſh not.*

3. Let me mention one conſideration more of a very ſerious nature, and that is, the diſhonor which would be done to God, and the fear of his diſpleaſure, if an oppoſer of Chriſtianity ſhould be preferred. Were our government not elective, there would be an excuſe for a weak or a bad man being exalted to the higheſt place. But when this depends upon our own choice, the blame muſt reſt entirely upon ourſelves; and the voice of the nation in calling a deiſt to the firſt office muſt be conſtrued into no leſs than rebellion againſt God. What he ſaid reſpecting the

* Lord Rocheſter, during his laſt illneſs, often exclaimed, "Mr. "Hobbes and the philoſophers have been my ruin;" then putting his hand upon a large bible that lay beſide him, he cried out with great rapture, "This, this is the true philoſophy."

Iſraelites when they requeſted a king, he would ſay reſpecting us, "they have rejected me, that I ſhould "not reign over them."* Though there is nothing in the conſtitution to reſtrict our choice, yet the open and warm preference of a manifeſt enemy to the religion of Chriſt, in a Chriſtian nation, would be an awful ſymtom of the degeneracy of that nation, and I repeat it, a rebellion againſt God. Whatever might be the intention, the conduct would beſpeak nothing elſe. The want of a teſt or a proviſion that the ſupreme magiſtrate ſhould be a profeſſor of Chriſtianity would ſhow the temper of the nation more clearly, and render their conduct the more ſtriking. We now freely declare our own choice. Would Jews or Mahometans, conſiſtently with their belief, elect a Chriſtian? And ſhall Chriſtians be leſs zealous and active than them? Shall we who profeſs to honor the Son of God, willingly and deliberately promote a man who diſhonors him; one who, if he acts upon his belief, muſt oppoſe the propagation of what he deems an impoſition upon mankind and the ſource of miſeries. Moſt merciful God! forgive the thought of the heart, to take council together againſt thee, and againſt thine ANOINTED.

The friends of Mr. Jefferſon may be divided into three claſſes; one who are the more intent upon his election becauſe they believe him to be an infidel; another, who are attached to his political principles, but do not wiſh, on account of his infidelity, to ſee him Preſident; and a third, who are in danger of being deceived and led aſtray by the ſide which they

* i. Sam. viii. 7.

have eſpouſed. With the firſt, no argument of mine can be expected to prevail. The ſofteſt name which I ſhall receive from them is bigot, zealot, and enthuſiaſt. They will prefer Electors, if they can enſure them, who are infidels; and if Electors themſelves, they will vote for Mr. Jefferſon. To the ſecond claſs nothing need be ſaid, for they feel and will do their duty. It is with the third and laſt claſs I would reaſon a little, in the moſt ſolemn, affectionate, and earneſt manner.

Do you believe that Mr. Jefferſon is an oppoſer of divine revelation? Can any doubt remain in your minds after the evidence which has been produced? Or have you only a bare ſuſpicion of him? Then you ought not to promote his election. Conſcience is not ſafe, while there is a doubt or ſuſpicion. Do you admit the remoteſt danger of the conſequences which have been pointed out? Why then would you chooſe him? Where is the neceſſity of any riſk at all? Are there not other characters againſt whom there are not the ſame objections, and who are qualified to adminiſter the government? Do not apprehend me to be an advocate for the other candidates.* At the ſame time I will ſay nothing againſt them. They are, I have reaſon to believe, irreproachable. But there are many others, and you know that there are, who would fill the office of Preſident with reputation and uſefulneſs. Neceſſity, therefore, you cannot plead; and I will venture it as my ſerious opinion, that rather than be inſtrumental in the election of Mr. Jefferſon, it would be more acceptable to God and beneficial to the intereſts of your country, to throw away your votes.

* Mr. Pinckney and Mr. Adams.

Do you ſay that there has long been a complaint againſt the meaſures of government? we wiſh to make a change; and at any rate, there can be no harm in trying other men? Be it ſo. But let your choice be wiſe and prudent. Have a regard for the honor of God, and the welfare of your country. Beware of approaching near to a ſurrender of judgment and conſcience to any political views.

Some time hereafter you will thank me for what I am now going to ſay, and pronounce it to be a ſalutary truth. At preſent you will hardly bear it. If Mr. Jefferſon ſhould be the Preſident, and ſhould adminiſter the government with the higheſt political wiſdom, your complaints will be as numerous and as grevious, in the ſpace of a ſhort time, as they are now. It never has been, never will be, and never can be otherwiſe in the preſent ſtate of human affairs. Mankind are impatient under juſt government. The *outs* murmur againſt the *ins*. All the expectants of office cannot be gratified. The greater part, change ever ſo often, muſt be wofully diſappointed. "Party is the madneſs of many for the gain of a few." "The gameſter always complains that the cards are badly ſhuffled until he gets a good hand."

You may hear, as uſual, many ſtories circulated, and much abuſe. You may hear the miniſters of Chriſt aſſailed. You may hear the facts which I have ſtated denied or miſrepreſented. If admitted, ſome may offer to be ſureties for Mr. Jefferſon, that he will not interfere with religious concerns. I beg you not to depend upon ſureties who may themſelves be bankrupts in the faith. Such will ſeek to banter you

out of your conſcientious ſcruples, and if they cannot, will give you ſtrong aſſurance. It is a caſe in which you cannot admit a ſurety. The queſtion is not what he will *do*, but what he *is*. Is he an infidel? then you cannot elect him without betraying your Lord. No circumſtance can warrant your preference of him. I beg you alſo to remark, that a character muſt be ſuſpicious when great pains are thought neceſſary to clear it up. Why all theſe pains, and what need of ſureties? There is a ſhort and eaſy way to ſettle the whole buſineſs. Let Mr. Jefferſon only ſet his name to the firſt part of the apoſtle's creed. "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jeſus Chriſt, his only begotten Son, our Lord." Can the miniſters of the goſpel, who are jealous for the glory of God, and the people to whom Chriſt is precious, require and expect leſs?—You will hear it ſaid, that whatever may be the character of Mr. Jefferſon, he is not worſe than many of thoſe who cenſure him. Were this true, it would not excuſe his election. To chooſe a bad man becauſe others are bad, can never be a ſufficient reaſon, unleſs all are equally bad. That we have no unexceptionable characters, I aver is not true. Beſides it is not true that Mr. Jefferſon is as good as his opponents, in the ſenſe in which it ought to be taken. Though a man profeſſing Chriſtianity may be as immoral in his conduct as a man profeſſing infidelity, yet who of theſe two is the beſt man to put into a place of high truſt and extenſive influence, is totally of a different queſtion. I contend that the man profeſſing chriſtianity is infinitely ſafer; and that Chriſtians cannot, conſiſtently with the dictates of their conſcience, and the obligations which they owe to their Divine Re-

deemer, voluntarily chooſe any other. The profeſſion will have great weight with the community; it will, more or leſs, reſtrain the man himſelf, and may operate in time to the entire reformation of his life. But on the infidel we have no hold. In what way will you bind him who has broken the bands of religion aſſunder and caſt away its cords from him?

Will you then, my fellow-citizens, with all this evidence, and all theſe conſequences before you, vote for electors who you believe will vote for Mr. Jefferſon; or, if you are electors will you vote for him yourſelves? Can you do either of theſe with a clear judgment, a peaceful conſcience, and an unſhaken hand? If you can, do it. Let nothing warp you from that line of conduct which an enlightened conſcience directs, and the great Judge of all will approve. As to myſelf, were Mr. Jefferſon connected with me by the neareſt ties of blood, and did I owe him a thouſand obligations, I would not, and could not vote for him. No; ſooner than ſtretch forth my hand to place him at the head of the nation, "Let mine arm fall from my ſhoulder-blade, and my arm be broken from the bone."* I can exalt no man who reviles my Saviour. We have ſeen tokens of the divine diſpleaſure for ſeveral years paſt; and ſhould the Preſidential chair be permitted to become "the ſeat of the ſcornful," I muſt conſider it as an awful frown from Heaven, and the beginning of miſeries. Natural peſtilence is mercy compared with moral; and no nation can be more unhappy than to forſake God, and to be given up by him. If to this we are doomed, may the years be ſhortened! and may even you, the unwary inſtruments of drawing

* Job xxxi. 32.

down the calamities, be ſheltered, and obtain the forgiveneſs of God and your country!

To conclude, I have not ſet my name to this addreſs; not becauſe I am either afraid or aſhamed; but becauſe I wiſh it to be fairly judged by its own merits diſtinct from every other conſideration. On this account I wiſh to be always concealed; at the ſame time, if any apparent neceſſity ſhould occur, I ſhall immediately become known. I would feel criminal had I expreſſed myſelf with leſs warmth. I rather fear that I have not riſen to what the cauſe demanded. Againſt Mr. Jefferſon I have no perſonal reſentment. He and I can never be competitors for any place of honor and emolument. Separate him from his principles, and I could write his eulogium. Let me farther repeat, that no anſwer is intended in this addreſs to his philoſophical and religious principles; that the ſingle thing intended, is to ſhow that theſe principles are contrary to what we are taught in the holy ſcriptures, and that for this reaſon alone, he ought not to be honored and entruſted with the Preſidency of the United States of America.

POSTSCRIPT.

BESIDES the paſſages which I have quoted from Mr. Jefferſon's Notes, there is one of ſo extraordinary and dangerous a nature, that it ought not to eſcape animadverſion. In page 100, *he ſays,* "*Were it made a queſtion whether no laws, as among the ſavage Americans, or too much law, as among the civilized Europeans, ſubmits man to the greateſt evil, one who has ſeen both conditions of exiſtence, would pronounce it to be the laſt; and that the ſheep are happier of themſelves, than under care of the wolves. It will be ſaid, that great ſocieties cannot exiſt without government. The ſavages therefore break them into ſmall ones.*" *Here is a preference plainly given of ſavage to civilized life. When this is taken in connection with the ſentiment advanced about the belief of a God, thoſe who have read Robiſon and Barruel will clearly perceive the principles of the* ILLUMINATI *in Europe. Their leading principles, are no religion and no government; that the inſtitution of theſe has introduced miſery; and that they muſt be baniſhed before mankind can enjoy that happineſs for which nature intended them.*

WHO are we to underſtand by the wolves! *Will Mr. Jefferſon ſay, that he means deſpots or tyrants? This would be ſhifting the queſtion; for he ſpeaks of nations in which the* law *governs. In abſolute governments, the*

will *of the monarch, and not the* law *is ſupreme. In ſuch governments, there is not* too much, *but* too little *law. It has ever been thought beſt in a free government to eſtabliſh every thing by law, and to leave as little as poſſible to the arbitrary will of men; and if evil ariſes from the multiplicity of laws, it is a leſs evil than to have no law. If Mr. Jefferſon means that any government is a* wolf, *in this he contradicts the apoſtle Paul, who calls government, "The ordinance of God," and the officers, "God's miniſters."* What he compares is* no law, *and* too much law. *Does he mean that the American ſavages have no law? In this he is miſtaken. They have a government and laws which cuſtom has eſtabliſhed. Or, does he mean that their form of government is the beſt? Then he prefers monarchy or ariſtocracy to democracy; for their government by Sachems or Chiefs partakes more of the former than of the latter. In ſhort, I ſee no way to reconcile Mr. Jefferſon with himſelf, much leſs with the opinions of the wiſeſt men, and the precepts of religion. As to the ſavages breaking the* great ſocieties into ſmall ones, *I need only ſay, that by ſo doing, room is made for more Sachems, but I doubt whether more freedom and happineſs are introduced. Were the United States broken into ſeveral republics, more ambitious men would be gratified, but the people would be leſs happy.*

What I have principally in view, is to fix the attention upon the ſpirit of infidelity which the paſſage breathes.— Some inſiſt that before the goſpel can be preached with ſucceſs to the Indians, they muſt be civilized. If this opinion be juſt, then Mr. Jefferſon, thinking them happier in their uncivilized ſtate, muſt be oppoſed to preaching the goſpel among them. Others aſſert with myſelf, that to

* Romans xiii. 2. 6.

preach the goſpel among them is the great mean to civilize them. If this opinion be juſt, ſtill Mr. Jefferſon oppoſes the preaching of the goſpel. The ſheep, *ſays he*, are happier of themſelves, than under care of the wolves.— *Thus, the happieſt ſtate of man is, according to the ſage of Monticello, to be without law, without government, and without religion ; to continue juſt as he was born, "a wild aſſes colt."*